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PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE STUDY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH*

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By psychoanalysis is understood a method established by Prof. Sigmund Freud of Vienna, which without resorting to hypnosis investigates the unconscious contents and motive forces of the mind. That such psychical powers rule below the threshold of consciousness cannot to-day be denied. Great poets and other students of human nature have long asserted that the most exalted achievements of the human mind have sprung up out of the unconscious. Exact psychologists like Janet, James, Forel, Flournoy, nay, experimental psychologists like Ach and Offner, have demonstrated conclusively the presence of formative forces beyond consciousness. The only question is, what rôle do they play? Shall we compare them, to recall a well-known children's game, to the magnet rotating in a canister, which causes the figures placed on top to dance? Or conversely does the unconscious depend primarily upon the conscious, and is it similar only to the dragging anchor which checks the headway of the ship? Or has the unconscious the significance of land or fresh water which originally rose from the ocean as vapor and then fell from the heights, in part to nourish unseen the roots, in part to reappear in changed form as springs? No comparison is fully suitable to the facts. If I prefer to compare that unconscious with which psychoanalysis is concerned to the land or fresh water it is for these special reasons: the conscious is no more a mere puppet, as several analysts formerly believed, than are free flowing currents without effect. But the unconsciousness is not merely ballast, as others have declared, but a mighty, formative, psychic reality which influences the conscious as much as it is influenced by the conscious.

Can it really be possible to descend into the realm of this earth spirit? Psychoanalysis promises that we may do so. By what means this is accomplished can here only be sug-

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gested; it subjects the phenomenon to be analyzed to sharp scrutiny and gathers all kinds of fancies which apparently make their appearance fortuitously in this connection. These associations yield a conglomerate which upon a more exact examination can be explained as a significant whole, just as one classifies portions of an exhumed skeleton as parts of an organism.

When I assert that the unconscious is the goal of psychoanalysis and that its technique is the collection of associated fancies to an apperceived structure as well as the interpretation of these fancies, then I believe I have named fully the characteristics of its concept.

Already psychoanalytical work has taken such a range that a brief review must limit itself to mere allusions. First I should like to express my sentiments concerning the objects of psychoanalysis.

I. THE OBJECTS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

At first only adults were considered whose mental or bodily derangements reverted to psychical causes. But thereby one was led to occurrences or even mere fantasies which are connected with the earliest childhood up to the age of perhaps four years. In no adult were these infantile roots lacking. Thus even the study of the adult became child study. Then gradually was awakened the courage to subject afflicted children to serious analytical treatment, as pedagogical scruples had till then stood in the way of the direct examination of healthy children. The few child analyses, those other than pedagogical and medical, brought equally favorable results (grave phenomena of anxiety were under investigation), which essentially confirmed the conclusions as to the psychical life of children which had been drawn from the examination of adults.

That we might pass from gray theory to the green meadow of direct perception let us be reminded that even analysis in the beginning turned itself to the individual symptoms alone. I first select a paradigm that may by virtue of its simplicity and lucidity gain the favor of the hearer. A boy is one morning dumb, and later in the forenoon sees everything enveloped in deep darkness and collapses in the effort to arise, while he senses a line of pressure across the breast. From a single subsequent investigation it developed that on the previous evening he had been about to confess a dereliction to the mother. Prevented in this by feelings of shame, he said to himself dejectedly: "I cannot even speak as I will! Now it

becomes completely dark about me! I hang merely by a thread!" One sees in a moment that the hysterical symptoms of dumbness, the dimness of vision, and the tension upon the breast only express symbolically the thoughts of the previous evening. They are, then, the expression of an autosuggestion, but they serve also the unacknowledged wish to escape a burdensome duty, for the dumb person can indeed make no confession, the half-blind cannot clearly see his task, the one hanging by a thread cannot firmly tread the ground. But this intention (and this is especially to be emphasized) was totally foreign to consciousness.

It may seem peculiar to the novice, yet the stubborn facts force the admission, that all psychoneuroses without exception form illustrations of such unconscious wish introduction. Impulse emotions lie at the base of them, and where an impulse neither reaches its goal nor is eliminated, a wish always comes into existence. It may be added that in this connection this word is used in a somewhat broad sense. Psychoneuroses are the picture and puzzle book that the unconscious holds before the observer. And what a gigantic picture book it is! We think of the host of cramps (e. g. hysterical screaming, writer's cramp, hysterical laughter, hysterical weeping, stomach cramps), of megrims, bowel troubles, hallucinations, imperative ideas, imperative feelings, imperative actions, convulsions, etc., we think of the tremendous effect these phenomena exert upon humanity, and we truly acquire respect for the great charade museum of the unconscious.

Now while Freud's incomparable sagacity followed the juggling of the unconscious he made a new and singular discovery. Among the smuggler-wares of the unconscious were found many of the same articles that even the healthy carry around with them for the most part neglected as worthless. Among such is the dream, which is indeed an enigmatical picture book. Among these contrabands we must also number the errors, such as striking errors in speaking, errors in writing, errors in seizing, forgetting, etc. Finally it was found that even in intentionally meaningless actions, figures, drawings, performed without purpose the unconscious ruled. What is meaningless for the psychology of the conscious proves a shining instance to the unconscious, at the same time being biologically purposive.

Had the neurologist Freud become an investigator of childhood and of normal psychology he could not have entirely turned aside from the study of the whole individual. Even the pathological symptoms, apparently lying ever so far apart,

were most closely connected and issued from conflicts in the center of personality. Was it, then, not a natural next step to investigate the effects of those unconscious processes upon the whole life's structure which psychoanalysis made clear? The problems of the study of youth were greatly enriched. A multitude of phenomena of youth that had created wonder as absolute riddles could now be understood. One understood kleptomania, pathological lies, strange imperative actions, as e. g., counting in walking, the anxious appeal to oracles, color-hearing, morbid disinclination towards special topics in school, sexual perversity, inexplicable love towards totally unfit persons, or inability to love parents or other people, fanatical devotion to foolish religious forms, pessimistic melancholy, sullen anarchy, and a thousand other facts that from the standpoint of traditional psychology had been completely inexplicable. Though many of these studies go a step past child study yet they are quite significant for the latter because in the child age the seeds are sown which later dominate the whole program of life. Out of infantile connections, of which we shall soon speak, issue the disturbing inferiorities but also incidentally the magnificent highest achievements which had previously formed the impenetrable secret of psychology.

II. THE ORIGIN OF THE UNCONSCIOUS POWERS

Insufficient as were my somewhat arbitrary suggestions concerning the sphere of endeavor in the analysis of youth, yet it is to be hoped that they created the impression that we have to deal here with important psychological problems, even if the pedagogical result were not present at all, which to the practical paidanalyst is the chief thing. Now, however, I presume upon the healthy skepticism of my hearers and their avidity for facts and hence expect the question, Can, then, the subliminal forces whose supreme influence upon life and its highest accomplishments will not be denied, be recognized with surety and clearness?

Only proper observations can decide. Whoever is satisfied with the fact that a significant number of noted learned men of various countries found the essential theses of Freud confirmed, is so at some risk. To-day one cannot well depend upon the indolent excuse that psychoanalysis cannot be learned and that its affirmations cannot be controlled by experiment. Whoever is not too indolent or too faint-hearted in the face of prevailing theories, and who understands in general how to observe himself and to form theories, can after some trials institute some very good psychoanalytical experiments. What

I propound in the following will therefore be an invitation to the hearer to study fundamentally the psychoanalytical method in order to demonstrate and to supplement the statements here made.¹

Psychoanalysis, as well as traditional psychology, acknowledges inborn impulses, instincts, psychical dispositions. It commits to others the task of determining the origin of these psychical realities. It acknowledges also the forgotten or unobserved mental contents which compose the potential inventory of memory of the components of perception. In all events which are germane to it it concerns itself with an unconsciousness of another kind, with highly worthy ideas and endeavors that in part were conscious but through opposing ideas and endeavors are suppressed from the conscious as painful, and in part through the same antagonistic powers are repressed and prevented from becoming conscious. In both exclusions for consciousness the unconscious can be disclosed only by its effects; but this is done, it seems to me, with the same surety that I draw conclusions from the psychical happenings of other men, although I cannot disclose them directly. Should it be a matter of repression or a holding aloof from the conscious, the unconscious, which the analysis first searches out, is to the conscious mental processes a concealed combatant who from his invisible lurking place often exercises a far greater power than if he had maintained his place in the conscious.

As an example of such repression I mentioned the dumb, half-blind, and hanging boy who in the moment of sickness had no recollection of the thought suggesting those symptoms and the wish lying behind them. Striking are the examples where a violent suffering of a decade's duration is generally known to go back to such a presentation. In the light of such experiences one understands very well how in the beginnings of psychoanalysis it could be said that the psychoneurotic suffers from reminiscences that lodge in the unconscious like a sort of foreign body.

Every repression means a further checking of development, a fixation. The impulse which is repressed by a definite achievement, a concept, a feeling, or an action, does not again venture out openly. It is the history of the pike in the carp reservoir. A glass partition was placed between the pike and the carp, and as the greedy fish dashed upon the intended prey it smashed its nose most painfully. After that it avoided its neighbor, even when the invisible barrier was removed. One

¹ I refer for the rest to my book, "Die psychanalytische Methode," published by Klinkhardt, Leipzig, 1913.

also sees in this comparison that in which the task of the analyst consists: he ought to show that the partition does not exist or that it can be overcome. It is significant for the study of youth that even in the first years of life associations are formed in consequence of repression, associations which can, not only in the tenderest years, create neurosis, but very often disturb the whole future life, as a gnarl mars the growth of the plant. The mental life can never be conceived as immobile, perhaps not even in the severest sickness. The progressive development influences repression and fixation by impelling the impulse along a path which it otherwise would not adopt, where it conforms little to the interest or natural desire of the individual. In this progressive development, then, new formations are consummated whose final result we meet in artistic, religious, ethical inspirations, as also in the little errors of every day or the significant, often surprising fictions of new disease symptoms. So far as these phenomena indicate a departure from the original course of development we can consider them the product of expulsion.²

This expulsion may occur in the most various ways: In the formation of strange concepts chiefly of symbolical art, in the transfer of the feeling energies to entirely different spheres of life; e. g. of love to mathematics or philosophy or religion or politics. The whole "signature" of the character can be very strongly modified, although the original nature of man always has a very important word to say about this. The criminal of lost honor, the fanatic for truth of repressed mendacity, the fanatic for purity who has to fight with unclean desires, the heresy hunter who conquered cruel desires against comrades or animals, are named as simple illustrations. That psychoanalysis can obviate such repulsions does not more closely concern us here. We see however how the repression of a single content is followed by a holding off of other psychical processes from the conscious, namely, even those remodelling ones whose result consciousness sees in the oft-mentioned pathological and inspired achievements.

Now how shall we think of the ideas and endeavors which fall to the lot of repression and its consequences? This equally knotty and noteworthy question leads us to one of the points upon which in analytical circles a heated battle has raged. There are in substance three opposing views. The first was

² The teachings of the church asserted rightly as the presupposition of Christian devotion the overcoming of the "natural man," only that the goal itself is not unnatural but is the expression of the "higher nature" of man.

originated by Freud, and as above mentioned it is the sexual impulse which after its repression brings about all psychoneuroses and the other evils of repression mentioned. To clearly understand this proposition the reader must accustom himself to a careful consideration of the Freudian terminology and sex theory; otherwise he may find himself in a horrible morass and will, as many incautious critics have done, accuse Freud of having lured him there. But who is able in a few minutes to present this bold, complicated, and paradoxical sexual theory, without engendering real misunderstanding? Only a few oft-mistaken traits may be mentioned: Freud, according to his express explanation, used the word *sexuality* in the enlarged sense of love generally. He added further that sexual desire in the narrow sense enters into higher functions, as sympathy, friendship, art, religion, and can thereby lose completely its original sensual character; also ambition, striving for power, and similar egotistical motives can be augmented by sexuality. Unfortunately it is furthermore not superfluous, certain opponents to the contrary notwithstanding, to lay emphasis on the fact that Freud from the first warned that repressed sexuality may take us to the lowest and perhaps dirtiest pathway to reality. For him the emphasis lay throughout upon the psychical factors of sexual life. Upon the capacity of the nearest lying sexual goal to exchange places with social values he based the possibility of a moral and higher culture. In these thoughts which form part of the support of the whole structure, I can in no way find anything that engenders scientific or ethical offense. I fully acquiesce. Yet there are, to be sure, in Freud's theses on sexual life not a few things which have rightly encountered sharp opposition. But into that I cannot here enter further than to give a cursory glance. Only one central thesis of Freud's need be referred to. The kernel of every neurosis was considered by the founder of psychoanalysis to be the repression of an incestuous desire which is directed towards the opposite-sexed parent and the jealous hate towards the like-sexed one. Every neurotic is a hindered Oedipus, he is sick because he may not espouse his mother or kill his father; every female neurotic must be considered an Electra in fantasy. That such impulses are to be met with in many neurotics must be admitted. But I am far from finding them in all. Hatred towards the father is not necessarily based on incest; it is even found in persons who have grown up motherless. But incest with the mother need not be a renewed child-wish and really often has only the sense of a regenerated fantasy: the dreamer himself might

develop it just to become another person or to form the life of another. While for Freud sexuality and love are very distinct, for Alfred Adler they mean little or nothing. It is to a high degree remarkable that one who knows how to observe so sharply and so finely certain lines of human life, especially the infantile, is in regard to the significance of sexuality and love really stricken with blindness. Adler derived all nervous phenomena and not a few character malformations from feelings of inferiority which revert to organic defects or insufficiencies. Sickness and the forms into which life is shaped follow therefore the fictive conductance lines (*fiktive Leitlinie*) to protest manfully against that inferiority, to work against the assurances (*Sicherungen*). Even the sexual fantasies serve only this fictive endeavor, which shows life in a false light. From the same source Adler derived along with neurosis, supersensitiveness, egoism, estrangement from reality, longing for power, malignancy, pride, immolating goodness, coquettish manners, cowardliness, and many other traits of character. His scholars continued the work: Fortmüller would deduce from the manly protest the whole of ethics, Kaus mendacity, Asnaourow cruelty, Wexberg anxiety, Lint in an especial case thievish inclination. So for Adler and his followers everything neurotic and the largest part of character malformations is displaced egoism; for Freud, so far as the Œdipus wish predominates, primarily unrequited love. Thereby Freud shows himself less one-sided than Adler, the former taking the ego impulse more earnestly than the latter did sexuality and love. Only Freud believed that checking the ego impulse primarily operates devastatingly when erotic reinforcements follow. To me it seems that the ego and love impulses *in concerto* are generally not to be separated from each other; every disturbance of the ego impulse influences very strongly the adjustment of love, and vice versa. Strong love precludes feelings of unreality as powerful pride forbids the highest love impulse. Only when one goes with or strengthens the other do the disturbances mentioned by Freud and Adler arise. Erotic failures affect self-feeling, reduction of self-feeling the courage of love. The impulse to repression and its after-effects can emanate from an encroachment upon the claims of the one or the other.

While according to Freud and Adler primitive impulse emotions dominate the realm below the threshold, Jung held that even highly important cultural and ethical impulsions operate in the subconscious. For Jung neurosis emanates from the inertia that establishes itself at certain development stages

and the resultant accommodation to reality, the inwardly bidden accommodation to higher cultural achievements itself resists and indeed reverts to an earlier childish relation. Inertia and indolence dispose the natural man to shrink from obvious duty; the actual conflict between inclination and duty drives him into neurosis, thereby into infantile customs, nay, into archaic functions. The dreamer, the neurotic, and especially the one suffering from dementia praecox, is atavistic. If as a result there appear sexual or incestuous fantasies, then they are (as Adler holds) only symbolically intended. In dreams, however, there is already concealed an attempt to interpret the inwardly prompted demands; in other words, to prepare an adaptation, which is by no means to say that this attempt takes the right course. Often the dream-effort at adjustment is intended only ironically. The task in any case consists in overcoming the inertia which opposes itself to the higher plane of development. Jung's hypothesis very strongly reminds one of the verses of Grillparzer:

"But children grow apace with years,
And every stage betrays itself
With restlessness and crankiness.
Indeed, oft-times an illness shows
We are the same and yet another;
And in one mould are both lives cast.
And this strange law within us rules:
Our soul expands and round itself
A wider circle circumscribes.
And such illness all have endured. . . ."
—*Judin von Toledo.*

In 1912 Freud in more restricted terms delineated the process of falling ill previously described by Jung (*Centralblatt f. Psychia., II. Jahrb., S. 298 ff.*). I must urge against Jung the objection that (1) by no means do all neuroses spring from inhibition to adaptation, and (2) indolence and inertia are an inadequate explanation of the origin of the resistance to the moral demands. As an illustration of how a neurotic development can appear, let us relate: A sixteen-year-old girl falls ill with violent headache and because of it is removed from school by the physician. As no improvement takes place, she makes complaint to me of her condition and adds that she is tormented in sleepless nights by the fear that she will become insane. The confession is introduced through the remark made in tears: "I suffer because there is no love among men!" It is easy to discover a very strong sentiment towards the brother. All other youths are dumbheads and coxcombs. Dreams disclose incest fantasies which surely are not merely

symbolically intended. Every thought of love and matrimony awakens aversion. The brother on the other hand desires that the sister address him before strangers with "Sie," and is furiously jealous of her. He suffers from suicidal impulses. It was easy to remove the inhibition and the headache as also the imperative ideas. It may also be added that the actual conflict is to be regarded as the next and most important cause of the repression in many cases. Freud has emphasized this as strongly as did Jung. It may be questionable to hold as Jung did that the source of neurosis lies in the tendency to resist adjustment to reality. If the thigh of a workingman is crushed by a falling block of stone one cannot well say that the imperfect adjustment of the bone is the cause of the fracture. It is condition, not cause. So when neurosis follows the death of loved persons I consider the incapacity to yield to the situation and to draw its consequences one of the conditions which made it possible for the repression to develop. Even there the early childhood is of importance so far as it can jointly determine the general features of the disease and at any rate revive again childish fantasies.

What has been said shows that one may not represent indolence or idleness as the real cause, the "*primum movens*," of repression and expulsion and the resultant defects of character before mentioned. But there is more to be added: Repressions that spring out of childhood may place an otherwise energetic man, one conscientious to the demands of duty, in a place which to another would be unimportant, viz., before an insurmountable barrier, so that the otherwise vigorous man plays a pitiable rôle. On investigation of such striking renunciation there will always be found associations which revert to childhood. Even healthy, yes all healthy people, have their idiosyncrasies which lead and force them to see and treat facts in a distorted way, and more particularly when they simulate repressed occurrences of earlier times. Even Jung admits that many neurotics are sick from youth, with whom the cause of the derangement is therefore not to be sought in an actual conflict (*Jahrb. V*, 354). If one bears this in mind he will see that, disregarding the rôle which Jung attributed to indolence (*Jahrb. V*, 422, 439), the difference between Freud and Jung is not great. It seems to me there are two groups to distinguish which are of prime importance in the study of youth: a *retention type*, with which the association comes from the past so that even a present or previous bagatelle assumes the proportions of a threatening monster, and a *repulsion type*, which in consequence of the trying present and

gloomy future throws even a normally developed man back into infantile fantasies and their automatic, possibly morbid, realization. The retention type makes out of an unpretentious present case of necessity or task a horrible affair, out of a gnat a camel. He constructs under the ban of the past a utopian present and future. Conversely, the repulsion type frightened back from the present treats the fantasies, which everyone has had and in the course of development quietly laid down, as something of prime importance, to live in and for which is the supreme task. Both types counterfeit reality and the attitude of the man to it: the retention type sees the past into the future, the repulsion type the present into the past,—both would press the present and the future into the mould of the past. The man who is *suspended between the two* projects the repressed events of the emotions belonging to the earlier time into some kind of temporal environment; the man *thrown back*, on the contrary, projects the emotions belonging to the present into the past, so that events of infantile and juvenile period, in themselves insignificant, become important and govern the point of view towards the present. The result in both cases is the same, the man becomes directed by the dreams of the past rather than by reality; that is not saying that in the aggregate personality must suffer a depreciation (cf. poets, artists, etc.). Retention and repulsion often operate jointly.

The present differences between the various psychoanalytical tendencies do not indicate antagonistic principles, but rather important complements which in their totality constitute a healthy progress for the new movement which is so important for child study.³ The errors will be corrected, the excesses smoothed off, but the method established by Freud and promoted by his students advances, to the welfare of science and art, to free men from fateful inward associations. I could herein only touch upon a few of the questions drawn from the huge domain of psychoanalytical activity, and, unfortunately,

³ Even Jung's "prospective tendencies" do not deviate in principle from Freud's prophetic dreams (*ankündigen Träumen*) except that Jung extended further than did Freud the function of the tentative anticipation of the future which is to be realized in the dream. In my "*Untersuchen über die religiöse Zungenrede*" (Jahrb. f. Psychoanal. Forschungen, Bd. III., 1 u. 2 Hälfte, also published separately by Deuticke, Vienna in 1911), I showed how in particular automatisms there is a reaching back to the past but at the same time with their help there is an attempt to attain a new future. Flournoy was the first to refer to the teleological significance of hallucination ("*Automatisme teleologique antisuicide*," Arch. de Psychologie, t. 7, p. 113-137, 1908).

could do this only in dry generalities unaccompanied by the interesting pictures of concrete experience. I must even refrain from stating the numerous laws founded upon psychoanalysis or even the fundamentally important facts of the opposition to analysis and the transfer of consciously formed contents and feelings to the analyst.

A rich banquet awaits those who value truth above tradition and who will not sleep when the swords clash in the battle for a great good cause. To be sure, even snares, manipulated by incredible means, await those who set foot upon newly discovered lands. But whoever takes up the fight cannot but accord with the beautiful sentiment of Romain Rolland's words: "The soul that once has looked upon the Countenance of Truth and seeks to deny it, destroys himself." That significant discoveries have already been achieved is not to be denied by even the embittered opponent of psychoanalysis. Much, yes, the most, is yet to be clarified. Whoever has the inclination and talents for earnest, arduous research work is invited to collaborate.